

STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT

Basham Press Release

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SEN. BASHAM UNVEILS WEB SITE TO RALLY PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE MICHIGAN SMOKE-FREE DINING ACT

Smoke-free dining supporters encouraged to visit www.smokefreediningpetition.com

LANSING – State Sen. Ray Basham (D-Taylor) was joined today by representatives from Michigan's American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, American Heart Association, Michigan Citizens for Smoke-free Air, and Tobacco-Free Michigan to launch a new Web site (www.smokefreediningpetition.com) to rally support behind statewide efforts to ban smoking in all public restaurants in Michigan.

"I have introduced the Michigan Smoke-free Dining Act on three occasions," Sen. Basham said. "Each time, powerful lobbyists from tobacco companies and the Michigan Restaurant Association have succeeded in thwarting this common-sense legislation. I hope that through today's efforts, we will begin to force some action on this important public health issue."

According to data from Michigan Citizens for Smoke-free Air, nearly three-quarters (73.9 percent) of adults in Michigan do not smoke. Data from the group reports that the top 10 Michigan cities offering the most smoke-free restaurants are Grand Rapids, Traverse City, Ann Arbor, Muskegon, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Flint, Jackson, and Troy.

Secondhand smoke has been classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a Group A carcinogen because it is a known cause of lung cancer in humans and contains 4,000 chemicals including known toxins such as formaldehyde, benzene, and hydrogen cyanide.

Workers have been awarded unemployment, disability and worker's compensation benefits for illness due to exposure to secondhand smoke.

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The Michigan Smoke-Free Dining Act (SB 186) states that: A food service establishment shall not allow smoking in the public areas of the food service establishment. Public areas include, but are not limited to, all areas of a food service establishment that are open to the public. The legislation does not apply to private clubs, fraternal organizations, private facilities served by a catering kitchen, private banquet rooms, and bowling centers that have less than 30 percent of their gross income from the sale of food.
